



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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*Eastern District of Pennsylvania*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 7, 2005

## **FOUR CHARGED WITH DISTRIBUTION OF “CRYSTAL METH”**

PHILADELPHIA – United States Attorney Patrick L. Meehan, Diane E. Gibbons, Bucks County District Attorney, James M. Kasson, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, John A. Wisniewski Postal Inspector In-Charge and Sylvester M. Johnson, Philadelphia Police Commissioner today announced the filing of two indictments charging the distribution of methamphetamine in a crystallized form.

The first indictment charges that from at least in or about July 2004 through on or about June 8, 2005 Edward Huddleston concealed quantities ranging from approximately one ounce to ten pounds of methamphetamine in a crystalized form in coffee jars, baseball bats with hollowed chambers, stereo equipment, a hollowed telescope, and a plasma television set and shipped the items from California to locations in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Dublin, Pennsylvania, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania and other locations in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania for distribution by David Stroot and Joseph Ragnoli.

The second indictment charges on May 2, 2005 John Carbine distributed approximately 224 grams of methamphetamine in a crystalized form and possessed with intent to distribute an additional approximately 503 grams of methamphetamine in a crystalized form.

“This case is just one example of a growing problem,” said Meehan. “Methamphetamine abuse is increasing throughout the country and while it might not be the number one drug problem in our area yet, we have to educate ourselves, especially our children and parents, about its devastating effects.”

A recent survey of 500 sheriff’s departments in 45 states indicates that methamphetamine abuse has become the nation’s leading drug problem affecting local law enforcement agencies.

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, in 1992 there were 14,554 admissions to treatment for methamphetamine throughout the United States, representing 1% of all treatment admissions during the year. By 2002, the number of methamphetamine admissions to treatment increased to 104,481, representing 5.5% of all admissions.

For more information on methamphetamine:

<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/drugfact/methamphetamine/index.html>

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANT

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR DATE OF BIRTH
EDWARD HUDDLESTON	Camarillo, California	4/15/78
DAVID STROOT	Dublin, PA	8/17/78
JOSEPH RAGNOLI	Richboro, PA	2/23/68
JOHN CARBINE	Ottsville, PA	11/14/63

The defendants faces a total maximum term of life imprisonment.

The case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bucks County District Attorney's Office, and the Philadelphia Police Department with the assistance of the U.S. Postal Inspectors, the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, the Plumsted Township Police Department, the Buckingham Township Police Department, and the Perkasie Borough Police Department.

"The culmination of this investigation has resulted in the dismantlement of a major national drug trafficking organization and it's international source of supply," said James M. Kasson, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration. "This impact was only made achievable through the cooperation and dedication of our local and federal law enforcement partners, including the U.S. Attorney's Office, Bucks County District Attorney's Office, Philadelphia Police, and U.S. Postal Inspectors."

The case has been assigned to Assistant United States Attorneys Barry Gross and Paul Mansfield.

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